

Principal deal

Administrators, board reach tentative accord

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The union representing school administrators and the Farmington Board of Education have reached a tentative agreement on a new two-year contract.

The pact calls for a 5-percent raise overall and an additional 1-percent incentive payment annually.

Membership of the 43-employee Farmington Association of School Administrators is expected to ratify the deal Tuesday afternoon. The board is expected to OK it at Tuesday's meeting.

"We're pretty pleased with it," said FASA president Ken Dean, who is an assistant principal at

Farmington High. "Negotiations went smoothly . . . (There were) very friendly discussions."

In the new contract, the board is allowed to appoint people to administrative position openings instead of those jobs being posted internally, Dean said.

Candidates have typically gone through screening and interview committees, which consist of administrators, teachers and parents. They make recommendations to the school chief, who in turn, submits the name of a finalist to the board to hire.

Screening and interviewing committees are not eliminated under the new agreement, said assistant superintendent for Staff

and Community Services Sue Zurvalec. The superintendent now has a choice whether to use it.

"It provides the superintendent with greater flexibility in filling administrative vacancies," Zurvalec said.

Use of screening and interview committees is not always necessary, Zurvalec said. One example involved the recent transfer of Pam O'Malley from a central office position to O.E. Dunckel Middle School principal.

O'Malley served as interim principal there, but still had to go through the screening and interview process before being hired.

Screening and interview com-

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mittees were used when Rande Horn was hired as Harrison High principal last year.

Assistant principal Norman Dickson subsequently sued the district, claiming age discrimination. A federal judge threw the suit out of court, saying the dis-

trict's hiring practices were not at fault.

Those in the district who want to be transferred would still be considered for openings.

"It's not like those people who want to go somewhere would be shut out," Dean said.

Health-care coverage remains unchanged. Last year, the district switched from third-party administrators MESSA (Michigan Education Special Services Association) to MEBS (Michigan Employee Benefit Service).

The teachers union, Farmington Education Association, has fought the switch and is awaiting the outcome of an Oakland County Circuit Court decision on the matter.

FASA did not fight the change, which included the same health-care coverage. The new system has been "cumbersome," Dean said.

Some of our people are not real happy with it," Dean said. "We're working through it. They seem to be ironing out the differences."

CLARIFICATION

In an article on a land acquisition tax proposal in Monday's Observer, Sharon Stein, who chairs Voters' Voice, said, "I would have a problem encouraging residents to support this (proposal) until I was sure that the majority of the city council was going to represent the residents."

Dividend announced

Douglas & Lomason Company of Farmington Hills announced declaration of its regular quarterly cash dividend of 10 cents per common share of business Sept. 15.

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